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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Twenty-seventh session of the Commission/ eighteenth meeting of the Conference of Ministers

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
20-24 April 1992

FOLLOW-UP ACTION ON RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION/ SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS

1. The twenty-sixth session of the Commission/seventeenth meeting of the Conference of Ministers responsible for Economic Development and Planning was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 9 to 13 May 1991. The meeting adopted 21 resolutions embracing most of the issues discussed by the Conference. Some of those resolutions were specifically addressed to the United Nations General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), some were addressed to member States and international organizations and others were addressed to the ECA Executive Secretary. The purpose of the present document is to appraise the meeting with the actions taken by the secretariat towards the implementation of these resolutions.

Resolution 705 (XXVI): Implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action and the Final Act of Lagos at national, subregional and regional levels

2. In accordance with operative paragraphs 5 and 6 of this resolution which called on the Executive Secretary of ECA, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the President of the African Development Bank (ADB) to jointly monitor the implementation of the LPA and FAL as well as to prepare a comprehensive and sectoral review of the LPA and FAL, the secretariat is now in the process of concluding consultations on the establishment of the joint machinery with the two other African regional institutions. However, as part of the preparatory work on the process, the secretariat prepared a study on the future role of planning in Africa for the consideration of the seventh session of the Joint Conference of African Planners, Statisticians and Demographers and, through it, the eighteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers. The study was undertaken within the framework of revitalizing planning in the context of the LPA and other similar regional programmes and strategies. It examines planning practices in Africa and drew a set of conclusions, namely the realization of long-term prospective studies for integrating short-, medium- and long-term planning; strengthening the statistical database; and the need for decentralized planning systems for popular participation in the planning processes in Africa.

Resolution 708 (XXVI): Acceleration of the economic integration process in Africa and strengthening of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres

3. In operative paragraph 4 of this resolution, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was requested to provide during its Fifth Programming Cycle sufficient resources to support the economic integration process in Africa, in particular to fund activities in priority areas which were not properly covered during the Fourth Programming Cycle. The orientation paper for the Fifth Programming Cycle, in the preparation of which the secretariat and UNDP collaborated closely, lays considerable emphasis on economic integration and cooperation as a priority area of the programme.

4. Operative paragraph 5 requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission, in close collaboration with the OAU and ADB, to redouble efforts to explore ways and means to provide all necessary technical assistance to the future African Economic Community, in particular, the drafting of its protocols and the implementation of the work programme of the Community. Such assistance is being vigorously pursued within the framework of the joint ECA/OAU/ADB secretariat.

5. The General Assembly of the United Nations itself, within the framework of the 1992-1993 programme budget, provided the MULPOCs with five additional professional posts to further strengthen the Centres.

Resolution 709 (XXVI):	United Nations second Industrial Development Decade for Africa (1991-2000); and
Resolution 710 (XXVI):	Second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa

6. Follow-up action on these resolutions is treated in document E/ECA/CM.18/17. With regard to resolution 709 (XXVI), it should be added that the fourth session of the General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), held in Vienna, Austria, in November 1991, adopted resolution GC.4/8 on the second United Nations Industrial Development Decade (IDDA II) which, inter alia, called for the following actions:

(a) The adoption, as top priority, of the programme for the second IDDA covering the national, subregional and regional components;

(b) The allocation for the 1992-1993 biennium of $US 8.6 million for the activities in support of the implementation of the programme for the second IDDA;

(c) Giving high priority to the mobilization of external financial resources and the organization of investment promotion meetings, solidarity meetings and consultations on industrial financing;

(d) Intensifying efforts aimed at providing African intergovernmental organizations with the necessary assistance in strengthening the role of the industrial sector in the implementation of the second IDDA at the subregional level;

(e) Involving existing African regional institutions and organizations in the implementation of monitoring of the programme for the second IDDA;

(f) Harmonization of the activities of the second IDDA and those of the second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (UNTACDA);

(g) Calling on UNDP to allocate under its Fifth Cycle (1991-1996) adequate resources for supporting the activities of the regional and country programmes for Africa.

7. Operative paragraphs 4(a), (b) and (c) of resolution 710 (XXVI) on the United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa appealed to all African Governments to give every support for the achievement of the objectives of the UNTACDA II programme at national, subregional and regional levels. The majority of ECA member States have now established national coordinating committees (NCCs) as their instruments of action for implementation of the objectives of UNTACDA II at national, subregional and regional levels. Their respective governments are now expected to report to the Conference on the functioning of these NCCs, such as participating in the implementation of UNTACDA II projects.

8. The secretariat has taken a number of measures in response to operative paragraph 5 of the same resolution which requested the Commission, as lead agency, to ensure that adequate manpower and financial resources, regular and extrabudgetary, are allocated for harmonizing, coordinating and monitoring the organization and implementation of the Decade activities and other relevant projects which have been mandated to the Commission. The United Nations General Assembly allocation mentioned in document E/ECA/CM.18/17 is part of these efforts. Furthermore, the 1992-1993 regular work programme of the ECA secretariat has been revised with a view to focusing the work of the ECA regular staff on the implementation of UNTACDA II. In addition, a project document has been submitted to UNDP (paragraph 6) requesting extrabudgetary resources to enable the Commission to hire some additional albeit temporary staff.

9. The United Nations and other international organizations are working closely with the Commission, in accordance with operative paragraph 7, mainly as active members of the Resource Mobilization Committee (RMC), the Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee (IACC) and of the Sub-sectoral Working Groups of UNTACDA II.

10. In order to facilitate the financing of national, subregional and regional Decade projects, in response to the appeal of the ECA Conference of Ministers in operative paragrapn 8, a meeting was organized with some 25 major financing institutions and agencies on 29 November 1991 at the ACP Secretariat in Brussels, Belgium. The main objective of the meeting was to explain in detail to the participating financing institutions, agencies and donors the UNTACDA II programme and to work out with them a framework of cooperation with the RMC.

11. In general, all the participants supported UNTACDA II programme. The donor community expressed its readiness to assist Africa to implement the programme. Emphasis was placed on the need to view transport and communications as vital economic sectors which should not only pay for themselves but also earn revenue for the national budget. In expressing their satisfaction with the UNTACDA II programme, many donor agencies also indicated their intention to collaborate among themselves and the RMC in financing the UNTACDA projects.

12. Regarding operative paragraphs 9-13 of the resolution which called for the establishment of a Single Bureau for the Trans-African Highway Authorities, the following are the steps taken so far:

(a) Draft statutes for the Single Bureau are being prepared for approval by the second Combined Meeting of Intergovernmental Experts on Trans-African Highways to be held in June 1992;

(b) The statutes will supercede those statutes and regulations governing the individual Trans-African Highway Authorities;

(c) A mechanism for collecting contributions from the member States to support the Bureau is also under preparation for submission to the same meeting;

(d) The new extended programme for the trans-African highways programme is included in the first phase of UNTACDA II. In this regard, the RMC, of which UNDP is a member, is expected to contribute to the mobilization of resources for its execution.

Resolution 711 (XXVI): Revitalization of mining industries in Africa

13. Operative paragraph 1 of the resolution requested the preparation of a comprehensive and comparative study on mineral development policies in Africa, with a view to recommending areas of these policies to be improved at subregional and regional levels, in order to enhance cooperation among member States and increase their negotiating capabilities.

14. The secretariat submitted a project proposal to ADB, the World Bank and their institutions. The objective of the project is to provide member States with some guidelines which they could use in the process of revising, reformulating and/or establishing their mining policies.

15. Taking into consideration changes which have occurred in the African mining sector during the last five years, the lack of investment in this sector, and the need for the continent to improve its investment climate, the secretariat has established a document on this subject which has been communicated to ADB for consideration.

16. Operative paragraph 3 of the resolution requested the Commission to explore ways and means of financing a special study on present conditions of artisanal and small-scale mining of precious and semi-precious minerals. A programme, including the above-mentioned studies as well as the study on mining policies, has been established as a project and submitted to UNDP for consideration.

17. The report on the fifth Regional Conference on the Development and Utilization of Mineral Resources in Africa was also sent to UNDP, which was requested to assist ECA in its efforts towards the revitalization of the African mining sector. The programme mentioned under operative paragraph 3 has also been given to UNDP.

Resolution 712 (XXVI): African participation in the preparation for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development

18. By resolution 712 (XXVI), the ECA Conference of Ministers requested the Executive Secretary of the Commission to continue, jointly with the Secretary-General of the OAU, the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). It also requested him to report to the Conference at its eighteenth meeting on the implementation of this resolution.

19. In the implementation of this resolution, the Executive Secretary of ECA requested the Secretary-General of the OAU to place the Conference preparations on the agenda at the OAU summit of Heads of State and Government. As a result, OAU resolution CM/Res. 1361 (LIV) of the fifty-fourth ordinary session of the Council of Ministers, which took place in Abuja, Nigeria, from 27 May to 1 June 1991, was adopted. It requested the Secretary-General of the OAU to pursue jointly with the Executive Secretary of ECA, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the preparation of the African region in the UNCED and take all the necessary steps to safe-guard the African Common Position both during the preparatory meetings as well as during the Conference itself. The African Common Position on the African Environment and Development Agenda emphasizes that Africa's approach to UNCED-1992 is anchored on three broad issues:

(a) Imperative of popular participation and full democratization at all levels of governance and decision-making process relating to environmental management and development;

(b) Economic empowerment of the region as a whole, of individual countries, especially women and grass-roots groups; this is required for dealing effectively with mass growing poverty, rising global inequalities and human resources development; and

(c) Necessity for the effective coordination of environment and development programmes and policies at the subregional and regional levels.

20. The African Environment and Development Agenda emphasized that environmental management is not and should not be addressed as a sectoral issue. Managing the environment is an integral part of the development process, which in itself demands a multifaceted approach. Environmental action, as part and parcel of the national, regional and global social and economic developmental process, while catering for global concerns, must be inward-looking in the first place. In other words, Africa's political and economic independence must be the interests to defend in all areas. These include negotiations on the development and transfer of science and technology, all forms of technical assistance and international economic relations.

21. In addition to this, the OAU participated actively in the first Regional Conference held in Cairo from 11 to 16 July 1991. The OAU is also a member of the joint secretariat which prepared for and serviced the second Ministerial Conference on the subject, held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 13 and 14 November 1991. It also participated at other related activities leading to the Conference in Rio de Janeiro from 1 to 12 June 1992. The OAU also presented the African Common Position to its Council of Ministers in February 1992

as part of the mobilization of the political will both for the participation of Africa at the Conference and the implementation of the African Environment and Development Agenda.

Resolution 713 (XXVI): The African social situation

22. Operative paragraph 1 of this resolution calls upon African Governments, the Commission, and other relevant bodies "to give priority to and intensify their efforts in the development and implementation of effective policies and measures in social development".

23. Included in the work programme of the Commission during the 1992-1993 biennium are activities which affect the vulnerable groups such as youth, disabled persons and the elderly. These include the preparation of technical publications on youth and health, the role and contribution of youth to the conservation of the African environment, youth associations in Africa, and the social and economic situation of the aging. In addition, an expert meeting on innovative strategies for dealing with youth unemployment in the region is envisaged.

24. Operative paragraph 3 requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to develop appropriate strategies to revitalize the social development programme in the secretariat "so that it could be more responsive to the needs of member States...".

25. In response to this request, the secretariat has created an Inter-Divisional Committee on Development with Social Concern. One of the objectives of the Committee is to formulate modalities on how social issues could be given due weight in the secretariat, in an integrated approach, in the medium-term plan, the biennial work programmes and in the formulation of outputs.

26. Operative paragraphs 4 invites all those concerned to prepare and observe the International Year of the Family, 1994, as proclaimed by the General Assembly in resolution 44/82. Pursuant to this, an expert group meeting will be convened in 1993, on the impact of economic and social changes on the African family, with a view to determining the policy implications of these changes and the strategies and measures required to maintain and strengthen the family as the natural and fundamental unit of African society.

27. Operative paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 underline the importance of the United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI), and urges member States to honour their financial obligations to the Institute. Bilateral and multilateral institutions and donors, particularly UNDP, were called upon to increase their technical and financial assistance to the Institute.

28. Although member States have consistently expressed full commitment and support to the objectives of the Institute, through various recommendations and resolutions, these expressions have not been matched with a demonstration of financial commitment to the Institute. Out of a total of 26 members which have acceded to the Statute of the Institute, only four, namely Uganda, Nigeria, Tunisia and Malawi have paid their assessed contributions for 1989-1990. Uganda has allocated a substantial amount of funds to the renovation the host facilities of the Institute.

29. UNDP's contribution to the Institute remains considerably the highest. Total UNDP contribution covering the period 1987-1993 is $US 2.01 million. As a demonstration of its support to the objectives and work of UNAFRI, the forty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly has approved a grant of $180,000 to the Institute. This should serve as an encouragement to member States and other donor agencies to increase their technical and financial support to the Institute.

Resolution 714 (XXV): Women in development

30. The resolution, among other things, requested ECA to organize meetings of the Subregional Committees with a view to revitalizing subregional structures on women and consult the situation of women in the context of the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation. Meetings were scheduled to take place as follows:

(a) For the Cental African subregion, in Yaounde, from 17 to 19 February 1992;

(b) For the Great Lakes countries, in Gisenyi, on 17 and 18 February 1992;

(c) For the Eastern and Southern African countries, in Lusaka, from 2 to 4 March 1992;

(d) For the West African countries, in Niamey, from 20 to 22 March 1992.

31. Priorities defined by each subregion at these meetings would form the basis for designing women in development (WID) programmes in each subregion.

Resolution 715 (XXVI): Improvement of the status of women in the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa

32. This resolution urged ECA to redouble efforts in order to attain the 35 per cent target for women representation in the secretariat requested by the General Assembly by 1995 and to ensure the incorporation of women's concerns in all programmes of the Commission. The same resolution requested ECA to explore possibilities of strengthening the women's programmes through allocation of additional staff to the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW), focal point on women's issues, and the MULPOC offices. In line with the resolution, women's issues are reflected in all substantive programmes of ECA and most Divisions have women professionals. In addition, efforts are being made to revive the Task Force on Women in the ECA secretariat, and a high-level advisory body was set up to recommend to the Executive Secretary specific measures which would contribute to improve the status of women in the secretariat. However, more efforts are still needed for the fulfilment of the resolution.

Resolution 716 (XXVI): Implementation an integrated approach to development information (PADIS)

33. A bid to obtain established regular budget posts within the 1992-1993 programme budget was not successful.

34. A project document was prepared by the ECA Pan-African Development Information System (PADIS), for the financing of PADIS Phase IV by UNDP during its Fifth Programming Cycle. UNDP has advised ECA that due to financial constraints, it is unable to assist PADIS during the Fifth Cycle. ECA is making efforts to have UNDP reconsider its position on this.

35. The Executive Secretary of ECA sent a letter urging member States to consider the inclusion of projects on development of information needs for funding from the country programme under the Fifth Regional Programming Cycle with a view to establishing the desirable linkages between national, subregional and regional activities and thereby strengthen the overall impact of PADIS.

36. PADIS has also started contacts with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and a mission is envisaged from UNESCO to PADIS to discuss further collaboration.

37. In order to diversify donors to PADIS, project documents have been prepared and submitted to bilateral and multilateral donors. The European Economic Community and UNESCO have also been approached.

Resolution 719 (XXVI): Contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development

38. Resolution 719 (XXVI) invited African Governments and the international community to pledge generously to the Trust Fund and urged those countries and institutions concerned to pay their arrears.

39. The secretariat has sent several communications to the highest authorities in several countries requesting them to ensure their obligations to the Fund were met.

40. During the last Pledging Conference, Angola had pledged for the first time and Namibia had indicated that it would communicate the specific amount of its first pledge in due course.

41. It should be noted that recently the following countries have made partial payments on their arrears: Burkina Faso ($US 19,000), Cameroon ($US 53,408), Gabon (CFAF 1,000,000) and Malawi ($US 4,500).

42. It would be appreciated if African countries and institutions fulfil their obligations under UNTFAD as demonstration of their active commitment to self-reliance.